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# Social Democracy and Sustainable Development

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# Social Democracy and Sustainable Development

Nobutaka Nagaoka

## I Introduction

Social democracy in the mid 1980s pushed the ecological principle or environmentalism towards one of top agenda. Particularly, the Social Democratic Party of Germany adopted its basic program in 1989 in Berlin, which built in ecology as well as feminism.<sup>1)</sup> The basic program, which the Swedish Social Democratic Party chose in 1990, also pointed towards a similar direction.<sup>2)</sup>

There is no doubt that the principle of ecology has gradually occupied an integral part of the policy and theory of social democracy. Seen from the side of ecology, it has not been confined to social democracy. Rather it is the Green Party that has insisted upon the importance of ecology in principle in modern industrial society. On the other hand, conservative parties can never be said to have ignored this principle.

The Green Party, which was very successful in the 1980s, gathered many currents of "new social movements" such as student movements, citizen's movements, anti-nuclear movements and women's liberation movements. But it is a single issue party, and makes conservation of nature the top priority of

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1) *Grundsatzprogramm der Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, 1989.

2) *Socialdemokraternas partiprogram*, 1990.

its agenda. Existing conservative parties have also turned to take ecologically friendly policy measures to cope with the popular growth of green party and rising public awareness toward nature conservation which sustains it.

However, when we intend ecological transformation of society for the future, we should realize it through open discussions without neglecting the interests of less fortunate people. Its project should be feasible in this very dynamic modern world. In this way, social democracy, which traditionally defends the principles of social justice and solidarity, seems to be the best to put the ecological transformation into practice.

I will examine the relationship between social democratic policy thinking and ecology in this paper. Stephen Tindale, a policy advisor to the present British Shadow Secretary of State for Environmental Protection, insists that environmentalism and social democracy share many social concepts and policy measures in common, in terms of the positive role of government action, the importance of planning, internationalism and so forth.<sup>3)</sup> I have the impression, however, that he is a little hasty in connecting them. It is only in the late 1980s that social democratic parties began to adopt environmentalism, and before then they apparently gave the economic modernization priority over protection of nature.

It goes without saying that the traditional constituency of social democracy has been labor union, and that their main desires are job security and improvement of labor conditions. In the post-industrial world, however, they should seek to build another equal society. The particular will of worker's interests should turn to a universal will that fits today's post-industrial world. Therefore the present moment gives a new challenge to social democracy,

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3) S. Tindale, *Sustaining Social Democracy: The Politics of the Environment*, in D. Miliband (ed.), *Reinventing the Left*, Polity Press, 1994.

and social democracy can and should cope with this challenge.

## II The Notion of "Sustainable Development" and its Social Dimension

### (a) Social Aspects of the Brundtland Report

It is well known that the United Nations Conference on Human Environment took place in 1972 in Stockholm. The UN also held another Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro as a twenty year anniversary.

Before this conference, the World Commission on Environment and Development, headed by Norwegian prime minister, social democrat Go Hareem Brundtland, completed a very important report. Its name is "Our Common Future", which was followed by plenty of research and policy. The most important point of this book is the compatibility of economic activity with nature conservation. In a word, economy with ecology. We have to work for it to realize that compatibility. She herself says in the Chairman's Foreword, as follows :

"the 'environment' is where we all live; and 'development' is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable. Further, development issues must be seen as crucial by the political leaders who feel that their countries have reached a plateau towards which other nations must strive. Many of the development paths of the industrialized nations are clearly unsustainable. And the development decisions of these countries, because of their great economic and political power, will have a profound effect upon the ability of all peoples to sustain human progress for generations to come."<sup>4)</sup>

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4) The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, Oxford U. P., 1987, pp. xi-xii.

Social Democrat Brundtland places a great emphasis on social aspects of environmental issues. She puts it like this.

"The environment does not exist as a sphere separate from human actions, ambitions, and needs, and attempts to defend it in isolation from human concerns have given the very word 'environment' a connotation of naivety in some political circles. . . . Many critical survival issues are related to uneven development, poverty, and population growth. They all place unprecedented pressures on the planet's lands, waters, forests, and other natural resources, not least in the developing countries. . . . What is needed now is a new era of economic growth—growth that is forceful and at the same time socially and environmentally sustainable."<sup>5)</sup>

The most famous notion which connects ecology with economy is, of course, "sustainable development" or "sustainability". In this report, we can find the well-known definition: "to ensure the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>6)</sup> This definition itself may express the most important policy purpose briefly. Its notion is worth a closer examination. But it is not sufficient, because it just means the equality between the present generation and the next generations. We can find a more detailed definition as follows: "Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future. Far from requiring the cessation of economic growth, it recognizes that the problems of poverty and underdevelopment cannot be solved unless we have a new era of growth in which developing countries play a large role and reap large benefits."<sup>7)</sup>

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5) *ibid.*

6) *op. cit.*, p. 8.

7) *op. cit.*, p. 40.

We can understand from this paragraph that we should tackle equalization within the present generation (gender, ethnicity, north-south etc.), getting out of poverty, and population explosion for the purpose of the attainment of equality between generations. Sustainable development can not be attained without global social solidarity. Therefore, the Brundtland report can be said to be the social democratic approach towards the global environmental issues on the stage of the United Nations. What I want to emphasize here is her deep concern with social problems within the worldwide view.

#### (b) Population, Environment and Women

In recent years, the UN has tended to be committed to the principle of equality, which can be seen at the influential conferences such as the Rio Earth Summit (1992), followed by the Cairo Summit on Population (1994), the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development (1995), and the Beijing Conference on Women in the World (1995).<sup>8)</sup>

Take the Cairo conference, for example. This conference's top agenda was to curb the population growth (sometimes called "explosion"), which has a devastating effect on the natural environment. But from the beginning of the conference, the discussion primarily centered on women's rights. The first speaker, Gro Brundtland, again, cut to the point of the empowerment of women, like control over their own reproductive systems. The Prime Minister vigorously reclaimed the importance of women's "reproductive health/rights", which ensures the right of self-decision by female over their own bodies.<sup>9)</sup> The female liberation movement in the 1970s gave rise to this

8) L. R. Brown et al., *State of the World: 1995*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1995, chapter 10.

9) She said, "Morality becomes hypocrisy if it means mothers suffering or dying in connection with unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions and unwanted children." (*Financial Times*, 6/Sept./1994.)

concept. It is deeply rooted in Western individualist values.

On the other hand, Pakistani female Premier Benazir Bhutto rallied a discussion in defense of family values in Islamic tradition. She said to the audience that the final text should not be treated as a universal charter seeking to impose adultery, abortion and sex education. Her speech was also applauded by the audience in the hall as well. We were struck by a sharp confrontation between a "pro-choice" group and a "pro-life" group: confrontation between so-called liberal countries which defend women's rights from a human rights perspective, and "traditional" countries such as the Vatican and Islamic countries. Although the notion of "reproductive health", as well as its definition, was written in the concluding document "Action program" (chap. 7),<sup>10)</sup> we can never judge and criticize Islamic values just by Western values. In such situations as the "Clash of Civilizations",<sup>11)</sup> where every civilization has its own rationality, the UN should be more democratized and vitalize the discussions attended by different civilizations.

So-called ecofeminists like Maria Mies also blame the prescription of the United Nations for having contradictions. According to Mies, we should not equate the reasons for environmental destruction with population explosion in the South.<sup>12)</sup> We must get out of the traditional dichotomy: nature and human beings; men and women; spirit and physical; society and individual; production and consumption and so on. She insists that the Enlightenment thinking that rational human beings have the right to conquer nature is opposite to ecological thinking. Therefore, the notion of "symbiosis" is presented

10) United Nations Population Fund, *The State of World Population: Decisions for Development: Women, Empowerment and Reproductive Health*, 1995.

11) One of the most powerful arguments can be found in the following paper. S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?*, *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993.

12) M. Mies, Can eco-feminism heal the society?, *Sekai*, Iwanami, Oct. 1994.



by her, in order to harmonize people with nature. In this sense, she renounces self-determination as a goal in women's emancipation.<sup>13)</sup>

Although both ecofeminists and Brundtland defend the conservation of nature, their standpoints are not the same. The approach of Brundtland's report is situated on the opposite side of Mies' anti-Enlightenment point of view. As we will discuss later, in the West women have achieved relatively greater autonomy by way of income earning after the Second World War. This economic change with extended welfare services must have promoted women's freedom to some extent. Brundtland's view on society is not less than thoroughly individualistic and rational, compensated by active policies of the government.

#### (c) Information and Environmentalism

At the Earth Summit, which attracted more than one hundred leaders of state worldwide and many delegations of non-governmental organizations, very important treaties such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Climate Change were proposed, negotiated and signed by most of the countries. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (originally the "Earth Charter") was also stated.<sup>14)</sup> In its opening session, Ms. Brundtland talked about the necessary engagement of all participants in the world, criticizing the Uruguay Round of former GATT for neglecting sustainable development.

It is in "Agenda 21" that the fruits of the Rio Conference were most comprehensively presented. Here, too, the social aspects were greatly empha-

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13) C. Jackson, Radical Environmental Myths: A Gender Perspective, *New Left Review*, March/May, 1995.

14) S. R. Fletcher, *Earth Summit Summary*, CRS Report for Congress, 18/Dec./1992.

sized. In order to combat poverty, the concept of "sustainable livelihood" was introduced in "Agenda 21". Its target groups are the following groups: women and children; the urban unemployed and the urban poor; the rural poor including smallholders, artisans, fishing communities, landless people, indigenous communities and migrants; and refugees.<sup>15)</sup> Protection and education should be given to these disadvantaged groups, so that sustainable development will be achieved. Another important issue posed in "Agenda 21" is the transfer and development of environmentally safe and sound technology.

The former US President George Bush attended this conference. But he took a rather negative stance to promote these treaties. He refused to sign the Convention on Biological Diversity, which disappointed many people. But President Bill Clinton, with environmentalist Albert Gore, tried to implement progressive policies such as the enactment of maternity leave, appointment of female ministers, tolerance of homosexuality in the army and the reduction of the government deficit. Concerning the environmental issues, the Clinton administration signed the Convention on Biological Diversity. Clinton and his colleagues emphasized the active protection of nature, at least until the defeat of the Democrats in the mid-term election in the fall of 1994.

Vice-president Al Gore set out for the reconstruction of American economy, with his main political agenda of "information super highway". Their policy document declares that families, offices, research institutions, schools and libraries will be connected on line by 2015, and that the database and educational texts will be accessed by every citizen through the computer network.<sup>16)</sup>

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15) *Agenda 21*, chapter 3.

16) B. Clinton / A. Gore, *Putting People First: How We Can All Change America*, Times Books, 1992.

Gore regards the high-tech industry as the most prosperous growth sector in the future, and he proposes a positive, cooperative government-business relationship, which will become a basis of creating a competitive edge with high-tech firms in the age of growing world competition. At the same time, he proposes in his own book "the environmental Marshall Plan", which requires a common action on the global level.<sup>17)</sup> It is very clear that Gore intends to associate the people's growing needs for environment with a main future industry: high-tech industry. He has a prospect in the virtuous nexus: investment in infrastructure (particularly in the sectors concerning environment and information)—competitiveness of firms—sustainable development. Environmentalism is the organizing concept for him.

### III European Social Democracy and Environmental Policy

#### (a) The Need for More Active Policy, Rather Than Laissez-faire Policy

The economic policies of the Thatcher, Reagan and Bush administrations in the 1980s regarded free market enterprises as the engine of revitalization of capitalist economies. Deregulation and tax reduction formed the pillar of their economic policy. According to this view, the natural environment is nothing but an object to be conquered, and is left to be exploited by industrial activities. The Brundtland report may not condemn neo-conservative politics, but it is clearly critical of it.

There are several reasons for laissez-faire economies not to be able to solve environmental issues properly. First of all, price mechanism can not reflect the true value of global commons, even though it is possible for private economic actors to make economically rational decisions. If proper economic policies like the Pigouvian type of taxation are introduced, we may expect

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17) A. Gore, *Earth in the Balance*, Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

environmentally friendly behavior to some degree.<sup>18)</sup> But actually, measuring the real cost which firms should have to pay is extraordinary difficult.

The "Rome Club", whose famous report gave substantial shock to the world, recently insists: "The market is ill-adapted to deal with long-term effects, intergenerational responsibilities and common property resources. It operates essentially to short-term signals and thus its indications can be gravely misleading if applied to long-term needs. The system of the market economy countries based on competition is motivated by self-interest and ultimately on greed. In the absence of all restraints, brutal operation of the market forces would lead to exploitation, neglect of social needs, environmental destruction and the short-term consumption of resources essential for the future."<sup>19)</sup> They do not totally reject the market efficiency, but they correctly point out its limits.

The second difficulty lies in the fact that the emphasis of environmental policy has been shifting from ex-post additive measures to more preventive ones. And the latter requires more active, interventionist policies, because indirect market-driven policies are inefficient for the sake of nature conservation. This second difficulty has two aspects. The first point, which the liberal market cannot cope with, is the rapid promotion of clean technologies. The sustainable development needs environmentally sound technologies, rather than the "end-of-pipe" technology or the simple dilution. Martin Jänicke presented a fascinating notion of "ecological modernization", which generally means the technological innovation within branches of industry.<sup>20)</sup>

18) M. S. Andersen, *Governance by Green Taxes: Making Pollution Prevention Pay*, Manchester U. P., 1994.

19) A. King / B. Schneider, *The First Global Revolution: A Report by the Council of The Club of Rome*, Pantheon Books, 1991, p. 198.

20) Martin Jänicke presents a theoretical framework for the analysis of environmental policy, which can be called "the ecological modernization capacity theory". According to this /

In modern information capitalism, high technology gives firms a competitive edge. Hi-tech companies by definition invest a large amount of money in R&D. The investment may sometimes be guided and financed by public governments.

The second point is concerning the relationship between the economic structure and the ecological burden. A research project of Berlin Free University, for instance, appreciates the structural transformation of Japanese economy since the first oil crisis, shedding light on the positive initiative of Japanese MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry).<sup>21)</sup> They claimed that there certainly was a sort of ecological implication for MITI's guiding Japanese firms, although its real aim may have been to reduce the import ratio. Ecological modernization leads to a high demand for activities in the tertiary sector. The growth of services and information may reduce the consumption of environment. The computer network, for example, may save the transfer of goods and personnel. Or people in the whaling industry can generate as much economic benefit from whale watching as from whale hunting. This also is an example of the ecological structural transformation.

Though lots of discussions have been accumulated about the active interventions of government organizations, we should re-examine the active role of democratic government. There are many kinds of coordination or contract between firms, governments, labor unions, citizens and so forth.<sup>22)</sup>

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\ theory, ecological modernization capacity depends on four basic variables: problem pressure, policy style (consensus ability), innovation capability and strategy proficiency. M. Jänicke, Conditions for Environmental Policy Success: An International Comparison, *The Environmentalist* Vol. 12, No. 1, 1992.

21) M. Jänicke et al., *Ecological Aspects of Structural Change*, Forschungsstelle für Umweltpolitik, 1993.

22) For example, voluntary agreements between the public agency and business on energy or environment are sometimes workable. (M. Potier, Agreement on the Environment, *The OECD Observer*, No. 189, Aug. 1994.)

In this sense, the social democratic governance has favorable chances to promote the conservation of nature. Of course, it goes without saying that we should make full use of efficient markets. The Brundtland report espouses the polluter pays principle by using market mechanisms. As I discussed earlier, for example, even the left wing within the British Labour party did not deny the role of markets, to say nothing of the right wing of this party.<sup>23)</sup> Anthony Crosland, a protagonist of free market socialism, was a very good example.<sup>24)</sup> But we should also be cautious of limitations of the market. We should seek more regulatory mechanisms to intervene into the working of the market.

But it does not follow that the so-called "large government", favored by the political Left after the Second World War and criticized by the Right in the 1970s, is still needed. Fiscal crisis and inflation triggered by two oil crises made expansionist policies impossible. As this is a very important point, it is worth emphasizing again. What I call "the regulatory mechanism" here does not necessarily entail fiscal expansion, rather it is a coordinated interaction among the civil society, central and local governments and informal initiatives like volunteer groups. In a sense, discussions as to how to draw a line between government and market are almost over.

#### (b) New Sustainable Development Model of the European Union

In Europe, the integration process has made great progress under the initiative of Jacques Delors in the late 1980s. He was a very ambitious social democrat with a strong will. At first, the emphasis of the European integra-

23) N. Nagaoka, *Social Democracy and the Market: Recent Visions on Economic Policy of Social Democratic Parties in Europe*, *Annals of the Society for the History of Social Thought*, Vol. 16, 1992.

24) A. Crosland, *The Future of Socialism*, Jonathan Cape, 1956.

tion process, however, was put upon the completion of a single market. The dead line of 1992 was set by the Single European Act of 1987. And this Delors' strategy had been successful until the economic slump came in the 1990s.

Along with the Single European Act, Jacques Delors, as a social democrat, called on for the inclusion of social protections and enacted the Community Charter on Social Rights in 1989. This Social Charter's aims were to defend the rights of workers on the European level and to create the social space. And on this basis, the institutionalization of the social dialogue between managers and workers in the multinational companies began.<sup>25)</sup> Most of these items were integrated into the Treaty on European Union (the so-called Maastricht Treaty) in 1991.

In the second half of his term as President of the European Commission, Delors began to tackle mass unemployment, which had been considered the most serious problem in the West. At the end of his term, the EU commission unveiled the White Paper on jobs and economic recovery.<sup>26)</sup> This White Paper presented the diagnosis for economic recovery, and finally depicted the path for "a new sustainable development model". First of all, it proposed the reconsideration and reduction of comparatively high labor costs (especially social security costs) in order to compete with Asian economies. Secondly, the White Paper proposed investment in the construction of trans-European information, transport and energy networks. As we can see from these projects, Delors' White Paper put a great emphasis not on the demand side but on the supply side management of economic society.<sup>27)</sup>

25) T. Inagami, The European Social Space and Industrial Relations, *The Monthly Journal of the Japan Institute of Labor*, No. 421, April 1995.

26) European Commission, *Growth, Competitiveness, Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century*, 1993.

27) This proposal, however, required certain amount of money, which was worried by finance /

According to the Paper, we have experienced the negative relationship between economic growth and more pollution. Traditional quantitative development has greatly deteriorated our quality of life. People's awareness of better quality of life and of nature conservation has been rapidly growing in the developed countries. So we should seek a favorable structural link between environment and employment. At the macro-level, the active support by the public of the research and development of new, clean technologies is needed to decouple economic prosperity from environmental pollution.<sup>28)</sup> Their tenet is to ensure jobs in the sector of environmental management by facilitating the structural change of the European economy.

Some look to Delors' inclination to market liberalism.<sup>29)</sup> It is true that the White Paper may contain several ambiguities and contradictions. But Delors' approach is a well-modernized social democratic one. And the picture which Delors drew has some similarities with Al Gore's. In addition to this, he adopted the prospect of sustainable development in the White Paper.

#### IV Global Environmental Issues and Individual Lifestyle

##### (a) The Sphere of "Lifeworld"

Quantitative economic growth after the Second World War was questioned for the first time by an American economist, John Kenneth Galbraith. He posed the notion of "quality of life" against the myth of unlimited growth.<sup>30)</sup> This has become one of the traditions in the thinking of the Left.<sup>31)</sup>

Our life as a whole consists of public life (working life) and private life.

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↳ ministers of member states. Therefore it was aborted at the European Union's Essen summit in 1994. (*Guardian Weekly*, 4/June/1995.)

28) European Commission, *op. cit.*, chapter 10.

29) C. Grant, *Delors: Inside the House that Jacques Built*, Nicholas Brealy Publishing, 1994.

30) J. K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*, Hamish Hamilton, 1958.

31) O. Lafontaine, *Der Andere Fortschritt*, Hoffmann und Campe Verlag, 1990.



According to Aristotle, enforcement, decision and discipline are imposed by others in the sphere of labor. On the other hand, freedom and self-decision prevails in the sphere of leisure. When the liberation from labor is discussed, two kinds of liberation are said to be included: liberation within labor and liberation from labor. The former concerns the abolition of so-called alienation at the shop floor. The latter means the growing leisure time. But we should seek for both aspects of liberation.

In the course of the Golden Age of capitalism, more and more women went into the labor market, which has given rise to a sort of social revolution. Their way of behavior has been shifting to a more economically oriented one. This shift paralleled the decline of social customs including religion, which were borne mainly by women. Thus a new social order has come where tradition or religion become one of many different lifestyles. Traditions have to explain themselves, to become open to interrogation or discourse. This is what Anthony Giddens calls "a post-traditional social order."<sup>32)</sup> We are beginning to live in such a detraditionalizing society, where we as independent individuals become free to choose any kind of lifestyle.

(b) Reduction of Working Hours as a Strategy Towards a More Autonomous Lifestyle

To create an autonomous, independent lifeworld,<sup>33)</sup> a variety of policies are needed. The center left wing are proposing the reduction of work hours, which has become a key term. In the process of making the Basic Program

32) A. Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*, Polity Press, 1994, introduction and chapter 3.

33) About this insightful term "lifeworld", see the following books. J. Habermas, *The Theory of communicative Action*, 1984, chapters 6, 8. R. Roderic, *Habermas and the Foundations of Critical Theory*, MacMillan, 1986, chapter 4.

of 1989, the theme of "time sovereignty" represents a strategic significance which shorter labor hours have.

Oskar Lafontaine, present leader of the German Social Democratic Party, insists that we should reconstruct creative aspects of working, citing French philosopher Jacques Julliard's words.<sup>34)</sup> He also places great stress on the supply side of social economic policy. He says that the future utopia will be achieved, firstly by broadening social securities, secondly by redistributing professions fairly through job sharing, and thirdly by redefining a new notion of work. He intends to afford a fine prospect of the future, by productive effects of education and job training. Even jobless people have a productive role, if they are willing to add value to their labor in a training center.

The concept of work has greatly changed recently. André Gorz, a French philosopher, argues about the recent transformation of the meaning of work.<sup>35)</sup> It was when the production and consumption of goods became predominant over self-production, that the concept of work was born for the first time in the modern world. The concept of work, however, has transformed partly because of deindustrialization. It has ceased to appeal to people. Though his view on modern society lacks consideration of dynamic aspects of modern technology, he presents a deep insight into the meaning of present work.

### (c) The End of Fordism and the Establishment of "Lifeworld"

The so-called "Fordism" in the Western capitalist economies after the Second World War, where mass production and mass consumption were connected favorably, was supported by several pillars in society.<sup>36)</sup> One of these

34) O. Lafontaine, *Die Gesellschaft der Zukunft: Reformpolitik in einer veränderten Welt*, 1988.

35) A. Gorz, *Métamorphose du travail: quête du sens*, Éditions Galilée, 1988.

36) About the concept of Fordism and its transformation, please refer the following books for instance. B. Jessop et al. (eds.), *The Politics of Flexibility: Restructuring State and Industry* /

pillars was the nuclear family based on the sexual division of labor. The nuclear family became predominant under Fordism. However Fordism needed such a large labor force that it pulled women out of their families. Even so the ratio of employed women was not so high even in such countries as Scandinavia until around the 1960s. So we can say that it was the economic factor of Fordism that accelerated the breakdown of the nuclear family and the increased number of women in the workforce.

Furthermore, buoyant economies consumed a lot of natural resources and energy both in the industrial sector and the household. Of course, they caused awful environmental stress and actual environmental damage.

At the same time, the establishment of Fordism led to the collapse of nuclear families in the social sphere. The empowerment of women, which resulted from their greater economic independence from their partners, brought about the pluralization of family forms: the increase of childless marriages, unofficial marriages, late parenthood and so on.<sup>37)</sup>

As Fordism realized the affluent society with high rates of growth, it could afford to externalize many of the functions which the family had had. What the end of Fordism means is the collapse of conditions to externalize in a way. It follows from this that we should be willing to lead a more independent life from the commercialized society. In this sense, the advanced world after the maturity of Fordism must proceed hand in hand with vitalized individualism.

Our modern life consumes much energy and natural resources, and has deteriorated the natural environment. And it is reported that the emissions

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in *Britain, Germany and Scandinavia*, Edward Elgar, 1991. A. Amin(ed.), *Post-Fordism: A Reader*, Blackwell, 1994.

37) U. Beck, *Ecological Enlightenment: Essays on the Politics of the Risk Society*, Humanities Press, 1995, chapter 3.

from our day-to-day life have been increasing.<sup>38)</sup> The number of cars is growing, large quantities of freon are used by households, deforestation is caused by our consumption habit . . . Our lifestyles are becoming directly tied to global environmental changes. We should seek to find more environmentally friendly lifestyles. In order to do so, we should defend our lifeworld from the system of our economy.

If we leave our leisure activities in the hands of profit-seeking private firms, we will not be able to enjoy an abundant environment. For instance, golf courses in the country use much agricultural chemicals and pesticides. Resort hotels consume lots of water and drain much water. The more enlightened and careful lifestyles we acquire in terms of environmental awareness, the less intervention of government we will have.

## V Concluding Remarks : Social Equity, Solidarity and Environment

I have taken a general view of recent social democratic policy-thinking, from an ecological perspective. Let me summarize some significant points here.

First, it has been widely recognized that protecting the natural environment and tackling poverty are becoming increasingly interlinked at the international level, regional level and national level. Social democracy has a tradition of commitment to the principle of social solidarity. Social democracy has the chance to take up the ecological challenge. Lester Brown and his colleagues put it like this: "A sustainable economy represents nothing less than a higher social order—one as concerned with future generations as with our own, and more focused on the health of the planet and the poor than on material acquisitions and military might."<sup>39)</sup>

38) The Japanese Environment Agency, *The White Paper on Environment*, 1993, chapter 1.

Secondly, social democracy has a tradition of positive government intervention into the economy. But the individual life in our present society is becoming more and more independent and autonomous. Therefore we should seek active interaction between public institutions and vital civil society. Gunnar Myrdal anticipated with courage a mature civil society, where each individual has a responsibility to organize his or her work and life, under the limited and decentralized state beyond the post-war welfare state.<sup>40)</sup>

Thirdly and finally, social democracy is situated on the tradition of Enlightenment thinking in the West. On one hand, it rejects a romantic view on society. It will modernize society by investing in growing economic sectors. On the other hand, the view point of sustainable development should be taken into account in every economic decision. We should definitely seek an "ecological transformation of economic structure", in other words, "ecological modernization".

(This paper is part of my research project on "Economy and Ecology" by "Grant-in-Aid for Encouragement of Young Scientists" (1995) from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.)

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39) L. R. Brown et al., *From Growth to Sustainable Development*, in R. Goodland et al. (eds.), *Environmentally Sustainable Economic Development: Building on Brundtland*, UNESCO, 1991.

40) G. Myrdal, *Beyond the Welfare State*, Yale U. P., 1960, chapter 6.